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ABSTRACT

A hallmark of any profession is the degree to which it has advanced, through research, that body of knowledge which constitutes the core learnings and skills of the discipline. Counselor educators must first ascertain where they have been and what empirical evidence has influenced and provided the foundations for professional actions. A review of 12 introductory textbooks in counselor education revealed which theoretician-researchers' contributions are frequently cited to students. An open-ended questionnaire completed by 24 counselor educators revealed what specific research has influenced how counselor educators function. Individual researchers most frequently cited were Ivey for his microcounseling; Carkhoff for his facilitative conditions studies, and Holland for developing a vocational identification and classification system. There are opportunities for both research and training to serve projected social needs of the next decade while at the same time advancing the profession. Counselor preparation programs must strengthen the traditional career core; make courses in multicultural counseling, prevention and wellness, human sexuality, and research required courses; expand offerings of marriage and family topics; and develop international internships. Finally, a national research agenda is needed that involves all of counselor education in meaningful empirical studies that will advance and validate the field of knowledge and establish the reputation of counselor education as a profession in its own right. (NB)

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RESEARCH AND COUNSELOR EDUCATION

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I. Introduction

As we enter the 1990's counselor education programs are being called upon to prepare counselors for an increasing variety of settings plus providing increased breadth and depth of preparation as well. These changes have included the expansion of entry-level programs to two-years full-time academic programs with attending breadth and depth plus 600 hour clinical internship experiences. Reflecting this broad view of offerings, Hollis and Wantz (1990) reported 44 new course additions made or anticipated over the period 1990-1991. Some courses (i.e. multicultural counseling, substance abuse and marriage and Family counseling) were added to 70 or more counselor education programs.

Certainly the profession has made significant progress over the past 30 years as we note that minimal preparation standards for entry into the profession have risen from the 32 hour masters, common in the early 1960's, to the 48 hours minimum currently specified by CACREP. Additionally, the profession has moved to further insure minimum competencies for entry into the profession by setting standards for the selection and preparation of counselors and the recognition of those qualified through certification or licensure. Currently CACREP has accredited 72 counselor preparation programs; school counselor certification existed in all 50 states by 1970 and today 27 states provide legal recognition for counselors licensed through the National Board of Certified Counselors.

Of course a hallmark of any profession is the degree to which it has enhanced and advanced that body of knowledge which

constitutes the core learnings and skills of the discipline. It is through the research activity that this advancement occurs. It is this topic-research-end its application to counselor education, that is the focus of this paper.

Research in our profession has been one of some controversy and concern over the years. Back in 1964 Hector noted that our professional literature was replete with alarm about the dearth of and limited nature of our accomplished and published research. Later Goldman (1978), in his introduction to Research Methods for Counselors, wrote:

> From 1969 to 1975 I was editor of the Personnel and Guidance Journal. I resolved from the beginning that we would publish only those articles that had something to say to counseling practitioners, that we were a reader's not a writer's journal. We found almost no research manuscripts during those years that satisfied that criterion; quite a few research reports were received, especially in the earlier years, but almost every one of them either was so technical that it could not be truly understood except by very research-sophisticated people, or was so limited in its implications that it really had nothing to offer the practicing counselor. . . . I came to the realization

> that the problem was not "research" as a general idea but rather the kinds of research that have predominated in our field. I became convinced that the kinds of research methods and the kinds of research studies that prevail in the field are largely inappropriate or inadequate for most of the kinds of knowledge and insight counselors require in their daily work. (pp. 4-5)

Stockton and Hulse (1983) appropriately called attention to the fact that "Counseling is an applied discipline with an emphasis on practice; yet, if the profession does not assume responsibility for intellectual inquiry which might provide answers to basic questions concerning effective practice, the field cannot advance" (p. 303). In joining those calling for more "useable" research in our field, we would emphasize that research (1) can provide positive outcomes, (2) can be carried out be even beginning practitioners within a simple framework of research procedures, and (3) can be interesting.

It must be acknowledged that even today our profession does not project a strong research image. Contributing factors to this image may be:

* Much research seems to ignore the common problems and everyday needs of practitioners.
* Research reports are often written in a manner that limits their interpretation and hence their

application by practitioners.

* Research activities and resulting research reports rarely "excite the imagination."
* The research monies made available by federal and state agencies are being increasingly cornered by private research and development corporations.
* Research is too time-consuming and has very few "rewards" for most practitioners.
* The conflict in values cited in Woolsey (1986) between the underlying assumptions of the traditional methods of research and theories of counseling.

Browen (1989) noting the relationship between ethical standards of the profession, professionalism, and empirically verified practices suggested that

> As counselors become accepted as professionals in society, it will be increasingly important for them to base their practice on accepted standards of care, including standards that have been derived from empirical data, if only to protect themselves from intrusive and expensive malpractice suits. And this principle will not just apply to private practitioners. School counselors and others working in public agencies are just

as vulnerable to malpractice suits as are those working in private settings.

Having noted concerns regarding research in our profession, the Strategic Planning Committee of ACES recently designated as one of the association's strategic goals, "the promoting of scholarly inquiry for the advancement of the counseling profession." The attainment of this goal gives us cause to move rapidly to develop a research agenda for our association. As a prerequisite to developing a research direction, we must ascertain (1) where we have been, and (2) what is the empirical evidence that has influenced and provided the foundations for our professional actions.

II. Research in Counselor Education

Initially, this discussion will examine our research heritage from the standpoint of trainee admissions and influences on training, and will conclude by suggesting some data based futures for consideration in counselor preparation.

Studies examining admissions criteria for counselor education programs have been popular over the past 30 years. No less than twenty-six research oriented articles have appeared in the Counselor Education and Supervision journals alone over this period of time, reporting studies investigating the predictive reliability of various admissions criteria.

Markert and Mouke (1990) reviewed much of this research in counselor education admissions published between 1955 and 1989. They noted examination of such criteria as academic aptitude as reflected in GPA or as assessed by exams such as the GRE, letters

of recommendation, interpersonal characteristics, using various scales or personality measures and personal interviews. The findings of these studies suggested serious predictive validity for each of these criteria.

Markert and Mouke then proceeded to survey 32 counselor education programs to ascertain their current admissions criteria. The criteria reported most frequently were undergraduate GPA's (varying minimums) 25; GRE or MAT 18; personal statements, 25; letters of recommendation, 29; individual interviews, 13; group interviews, 8; prerequisite course work, 18; and word experiences, 16.

Another recent survey by Cristiani and Basile (1991) reported responses from 24 counselor preparation programs. They reported that the criteria most frequently utilized by their sample were letters of recommendation, 23; GPA, 22; GRE or MAT, 22; Goal statements, 14; work experience, 14; interviews, 12; personal narratives, 10; and interpersonal skills, 9. They concluded that researchers have yet to provide much evidence that any of these criteria, singly or combined, effectively predict academic success or eventual counseling effectiveness. Nonetheless, many counselor education programs continue to apply admissions criteria that has little empirical validation justifying its utilization.

In addressing the topic of research influences on counselor education, we must readily acknowledge that all empirically derived knowledge appropriate to our professional mission as counselors could be cited as research that has potential influence

on how we educate those in our counselor preparation programs. I will happily admit that such a formidable and extensive task is not within the purview of this brief presentation. Too, my colleagues in this publication have already addressed research in many of the major areas of counselor education. Thus, this discussion will focus on (1) who are the researchers frequently cited to our students, and (2) what research have counselor educators noted as influencing them as counselor educators.

In identifying those theoretician-researchers whose contributions are frequently cited to our students, twelve introductory text books were reviewed. It was assumed that textbooks which serve to introduce beginning students to the professional field of counseling would by their broader coverage be more discriminatory in a sense than the more narrowly focused specialized texts (i.e. career, group, assessment). The consistency with which the works of the individual theoretician/researcher was presented across all the texts reviewed with the number of citations were the 2 criteria used in identifying those most frequently cited. The major contributors are listed alphabetically in their categories (always cited, very frequently cited and frequently cited) with their areas of contribution indicated in parenthesis.

(I) Always cited

Rogers, C. (Person-centered counseling)

(II) Very Frequently cited

Carkhoff, R. R. (Helping Skills)

Corey, M. S. (Group)

Ellis, A. (Rational-Emotive Therapy)

Ivy, A. E. (Micro-Counseling)

Krumboltz, J. (Behavioral)

Super, D. (Career Development)

Yalom, I. D. (Group)

(III) Frequently cited

Bandura, A. (Social Learning Theory)

Berne, E. (Trans

Brammer, L. (Helping Skills)

Cormier, L. S. (Interviewing Skills)

Egan, S. (Helping Skills)

Glosser, W. (Reality Counseling Theory)

Holland, J. (Career Decision Making)

Perles, F. (Gestalt Therapy)

Williamson, E. G. (Directive Counseling)

It is fair to say that most if not all counselor preparation programs cite Carl Rogers to their trainees and many will also draw upon the research of those very frequently or frequently cited.

A second approach was to more narrowly examine what specific research has influenced how counselor educators function. A brief open ended questionnaire asking for this response was sent to a sample (of convenience) of counselor educators.

This sample, though small, seems to validate earlier unpublished studies by the author (unpublished because of lack of a common core of research). Twenty-four (24) counselor educators reported a wide range of research studies that had influenced

their practice. The individual researches most frequently cited were Ivey for his microcounseling (four times); Carkhoff for his facilitative conditions studies (three times) and Holland for developing a vocational identification and classification system (two times). Several respondants mentions studies focusing on client-counselor interactions and supervision variables but did not identify any specific researchers by name. A number of other general areas of useful research information (twelve) were singularly noted, plus other researchers (six) who had made impacts on the counselor educators reporting.

At this point we can conclude that while research has failed to give us a single set of valid criteria for admissions this may be more consistent with a counseling philosophy of each individuals as a person of worth within his/her own uniqueness. On the other hand, despite such criticisms as cited earlier, our profession has drawn on both a common core of research data and a broad range of empirical studies to provide our knowledge base for much of our counselor education programs. Let me, therefore, turn to the more important task of examining our research future -- a future of both tremendous opportunity as well as tremendous challenges.

III. Counselor Education Research: The Future

As we enter the 1990's and emerge into the next century counselor education has the opportunity to not only build on the progress of the profession in the recent decades but to accelerate and give it direction. We may accomplish this through research studies that address our own professional issues and, equally

important and largely ignored, studies that address our societies's major social issues and the unique role we can play as trainers of counselors for the future. In this quest we are also responding to those within our ranks who are calling upon the counseling profession to become a more unique, viable and visible profession.

To succeed in this quest we should remind ourselves of those basic marketing principals (paraphrased) which suggest that

(1) what we have to offer is needed

(2) our response to this need is unique (different from our competitors and better -- more efficient and/or effective)

(3) we can offer evidence that what we offer gets the results claimed.

This will not be easy. Coyne (1977) voiced a concern that we've been aware of over the years when he noted that

> Counselor education and guidance counseling are rooted in adapting, applying, borrowing, and adjusting what has been offered in other professions -- a situation stylistically similar to a person continually stripping, refinishing, and using old chairs found in garage sales. While the final products may be sound and attractive, their basic structure remains the same. Counselor education could easily be dubbed a "secondhand rose."

> This continual borrowing has led the profession to contribute little creative and original directions to the fields of education and human services. It is largely because of this situation that counselor educators and guidance counselors together are finding themselves in an increasingly precarious employment position. Controllers of the purse strings now ask about counselors with increased frequency, "What do they do?" "How can we know they are actually doing it?" Finally, "Are they even necessary, since we have a school psychologist/ counseling psychologist/clinical psychologist/etc?" I submit that these are hard questions for us to answer adequately and that our difficulty arises in large part from the secondhand rose position in which the profession continues to place itself.

We do, however, have the opportunity to alter this image of an imitator and borrower. We can do this in the context of the previously cited marketing principals by a research initiative which

(1) responds to social needs

(2) re-emphasizes our uniqueness as a helping profession (i.e.,

our emphasis on prevention and development as well as remediation; the only helping profession with a career development base; the only helping profession that consistently works with populations in their formative years)

(3) anticipating and preparing for the future -- being proactive not just reactive

(4) involving our graduate students as active partners in meaningful research undertakings.

An analysis of futures data collected and shared with the strategic planning committees for AACD and ACES pointed to some of these futures with implications for counselor preparation as follows:

Future Projections and Implications for the Profession

FUTURE: THE WORKPLACE

Rapid technological change will effect virtually every work setting which, coupled with the continued movement towards information production and away from goods, and (to a lesser extent) service production, will result in mismatches between needs and workers qualified to meet the need and will also necessitate multiple career changes for the majority of our work force in the coming decades. The average age of this work force will continue to go up as older workers keep working raising questions such as

(1) will the older workers be willing to participate in the "life long learning" needed to maintain a world class workplace?

(2) will these older workers contribute to the difficulties young entry level workers are beginning to experience in finding jobs?

Complicating this economic projection is the prediction that unemployment/underemployment, especially with minorities, will continue to be a problem at this critical time. By the year 2000, 1/3 of our population will be "minority." This will amplify racism, which is already on the rise and threatening to be a very major social problem by the turn of the century.

Implications/Opportunities for the Counseling Profession

The counseling profession has a historical interest in, and commitment to, career development. We are the only helping profession with expertise in this area. We should expand this expertise to become "economy smart" as well as "career smart." We should also be more active in working with and researching with business and industry, vocational and technical educators, and government to bring together youth, training, and jobs to find answers to problems of older workers and to develop a world class work force. We should be the centerpiece of any legislation focusing on these career issues. We are not to date!

FUTURE: SCHOOLS

Learning will be influenced by a rapidly expanding information base requiring multi-media approaches transcending the printed word (i.e., electronic learning). New curricular emphasis will include new technological/vocational curriculums (similiar to those already in place in Germany, Japan, Korea); renewed attention to the arts; focus on globalization and living and

working with an international orientation, environmental conservation and the schools as centers for life long learning. (Also, longer school year and school day).

Schools will continue to be breeding grounds and/or reflect major social problems; i.e., substance abuse, AIDS, and other sexuality problems, teen violence, racial tensions, economic and educational gaps between the "haves" and the "have nots." Nearly all children will be "latch key" throughout their school years. One result: More youth "gangs."

Implications/Opportunities for the Counseling Profession

Prevention, wellness and development must become major goals of school counseling programs, and major research agendas for our profession. Obviously prevention and wellness courses must become a reality in our counselor education programs. Minority counselors are needed as both role models for minority youth and as multi-cultural awareness educators in every school. While certified minority counselors are preferable, this need is so critical that consideration of training minority para-professionals should not be overlooked if this is the only means of having minority adults in every school.

Further, we cannot continue to allow the bureaucrats, politicians, and others to ignore the role of mental health and student wellness in pupil attainment and their future citizenship. Counseling approaches should be applied to the classroom and the total educational environment. We must also anticipate that schools will have to assume more responsibility for underparented ("latch key") youth. School counselors must move now to prepare

meaningful programs. We must be pro-active! Program Development courses must prepare counselors seeking employment in school settings to develop such components for their total school program.

FUTURE: THE FAMILY

Dual career couples will be the norm by the turn of the century. Also, the workforce will be more mobile. "Roots" will be more difficult to put down. Further, as the American work force becomes more stressed out and children have less parental contact, the probablity of more stress on families is high.

Implications/Opportunities for the Counseling Profession

Marriage and family counseling must prepare for new dimensions as traditional family roles, patterns of living, responsibilities and relationships are altered. Again, researching these new variables will be vitale.

FUTURE: THE SOCIETY

Society will continue to experience most of the major social problems we entered this decade experiencing. This can be predicted because of our past largely remedial as treatment approach rather than prevention. As a result, crime and delinquency will continue to increase despite tough new laws and more jails with low income minority populations being both the most victimized and the most incarcerated. Gang violence can be a rapidly increasing problem unless appropriate preventative action is taken.

An increase in people abuse also seems probable in a more stressed out, less stable society. AIDS will effect epidemic

numbers in the immediate years ahead and substance abuse will continue to be a major social concern.

Implications/Opportunities for the Counseling Profession

Again, the counseling profession must stress and enhance its prevention skills, and must underscore its capacity to work with populations, (schools, work place, community, etc.). Counselors are "care givers." Counselors should be activists for caring environments in all of societies basic institutions. Counselors must develop programs for human sexuality counseling, values clarification and development and ecological management.

Summary

There are opportunities for both research and training to serve projected social needs of the next decade while at the same time advancing the profession to the pinnacle of all helping professions. Our counselor preparations programs must

(1) strengthen our traditional career core

(2) make courses in multi-cultural counseling, prevention and wellness, human sexuality and research required courses,

(3) marriage and family offerings should be expanded

(4) international internships should be developed.

Finally, we need a national research agenda that involves all of counselor education, with all of our graduate students as junior partners, actively involved in meaningful empirical studies that will advance and validate our field of knowledge and establish our reputation as a profession in it's own right.

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